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## Michigan Section Office of the Chair

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RE: H.B. 4446

Dear Representative,

I am writing you on behalf of the Michigan Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (MSACOG), the specialty society representing board-certified physicians in Michigan who specialize in obstetrics and gynecology. We practice the broad spectrum of women's health.

House Bill No. 4446 would amend 1978 P.A. 368, entitled "Public health code," to mandate that "a physician or a qualified person assisting the physician," at least 24 hours prior to performing an abortion, shall "perform an ultrasound on the patient, provide the patient with an opportunity to view the active ultrasound image of the fetus, and provide the patient with a physical picture of the ultrasound image of the fetus."

Any physician who performs abortions needs to know the gestational age of the pregnancy before proceeding: this is the standard of care. There are many ways to determine this, including ultrasound, dating by numeric pregnancy test results, uterine size, and Doppler auscultation of cardiac activity (which occurs at a certain point in pregnancy), among others. There is no medical reason, should an ultrasound be needed, that it could not be performed immediately prior to a termination procedure. The 24-hour requirement appears arbitrary from a medical standpoint, as does the mandated performance of an ultrasound for dating if other indicators agree on a gestational age.

The 24-hour requirement could pose a barrier to medical care for women who do not live near a provider of abortion services and to those women who are economically disadvantaged.

These ultrasounds are not medically necessary, so insurance providers will not cover the expense in most cases. There is no provision for paying for these procedures in the bill, and it would appear that the State of Michigan is in no fiscal shape to offer to do so. Women who are impoverished and those who are uninsured are the most likely to be affected if the burden of an ultrasound before an abortion is placed upon them.

For these reasons, the Michigan Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists must ask you to vigorously oppose H.B. 4446. It is not in the best interests of the women of the great State of Michigan to have this bill enacted into law. Mandating diagnostic procedures that are not medically indicated is simply not good medicine.

Sincerely,

Harold J. Sauer, M.D.  
Section Chair